



CITY OF LODI

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Domestic Violence Awareness Month

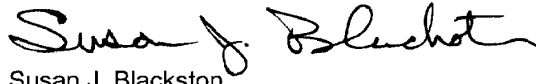
MEETING DATE: October 4, 2000

PREPARED BY: City Clerk

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That Mayor Mann present a proclamation proclaiming the month of October 2000 as "Domestic Violence Awareness Month" in the City of Lodi.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Mayor has been requested to present a proclamation proclaiming the month of October 2000 as "Domestic Violence Awareness Month" in the City of Lodi. Melinda Sparks, Community Committee Chairperson with the San Joaquin County Women's Center, will be at the meeting to accept the proclamation.

FUNDING: None required.


Susan J. Blackston
City Clerk

SJB/JMP

APPROVED: _____
H. Dixon Flynn -- City Manager

WOMEN'S CENTER



OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

620 North San Joaquin Street
Stockton, California 95202
(209) 941-2611

P.O. Box 2543
Lodi, California 95241
(209) 368-3406

1005 A Street
Tracy, California 95376
(209) 833-0300

Dear Friend,

We are pleased to send you our *Break the Silence on Domestic Violence* Action Kit. It is our hope that the enclosed materials will spark your own ideas on ways to become involved.

Our goal for this campaign is to get everyone in our community involved in some way in violence prevention efforts.

We encourage you to read through the kit, and think of some small step that you personally can take—hanging a poster at your place of employment, or in a laundromat near your home, organizing a get-together of friends or colleagues to talk about actions you can take. Believe it or not, even little things can make a tremendous difference for a person who is experiencing abuse.

Then tell us about what you plan to do! We want to know if our campaign is making a difference.

We are here to work with you, too. So call us to share your ideas and ask for help. We would love to hear from you!

Sincerely,

Kellie Brunson
Domestic Violence Outreach Specialist
(209) 941-2611

About the Women's Center

In 1976, eight women decided to create a center where women could meet in a supportive environment and discuss common interests. Beginning with a budget of eighty dollars, they opened a drop-in center in the basement of a local church, and women of the surrounding area were invited to bring their children for seminars, readings, and other group projects.

Holding town meetings throughout Stockton, the founders of the Center learned that there was a great need for a number of women's services. They decided to address vocational counseling, as many women with school-aged children needed help entering or returning to the work force. After incorporating as the Women's Center Coalition, the group of volunteers applied for and received their first grant from San Joaquin County to begin Project Step, a job-preparation program.

Service since that first Project Step program, the Women's Center has grown significantly to provide prevention and intervention services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in San Joaquin County. The wide range of services include:

- 24-hour help lines for individuals in crisis from domestic violence and sexual assault
- DAWN House, a shelter where battered women and children can stay for up to five weeks
- VINE House, a 24 hour safe house for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault
- AFTER DAWN, a transitional housing program where battered women and their children can stay for up to one year as they secure their transition to a life free from violence.
- 24-hour accompaniment and services for rape victims at the hospital
- Individual counseling for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse
- Support groups for battered women in Lodi, Stockton, Manteca, Tracy, and Escalon
- Advocacy and court accompaniment for victims undergoing legal proceedings
- Training for battered women seeking Temporary Restraining Orders
- Self-esteem classes for women at the County Jail
- Rape-prevention training for young women throughout the community
- Education programs on domestic violence, sexual abuse and sexual harassment for professional associations, businesses, schools, universities and community agencies
- T.E.A.M. (Team Education Awareness Model), offering domestic violence services to Southeast Asian, Hispanic and youth populations
- Satellite Women Center offices in Lodi and Tracy

The Women's Center has been nationally recognized for its services to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. Reaching approximately 14,000 people each year through its efforts, the Center continues to be rated by the Office of Criminal Justice Planning as one of the top ten programs in the State of California.

Financial History

The Women's Center relies on both public and private funds to support its programs. During the current fiscal year, which runs from July 1st through June 30th, the Center must receive \$170,000 in donations from individuals and businesses. The amount accounts for approximately 15 percent of the operating budget. The remainder of the budget is funded through grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the State of California, the County of San Joaquin, the City of Stockton and United Way.

Ninety-two percent of the Center's income covers direct-service costs. Direct service is defined as the actual services provided to clients, such as those listed above. Expenses include salaries, materials, and professional fees (for case managers). Administrative costs, including a portion of salaries for the Executive, Finance, and Development Director, amount to seven percent of the budget. This also includes occupancy and some professional fees (such as federally mandated audits).

What does this mean? If a donor gives \$1 to the Women's Center, 93 cents will go directly to client services. However all expenses incurred by the Center are necessary to implement the programs we provide.

"Are We Part of The Problem?"

Barriers to Getting Involved

Safety Issues: I might get hurt.
I might make it worse for the victim.

Feel Incapable: I wouldn't know what to say or what to do.
The experts need to help her – I'll leave that for them.

Personal Matter: I don't want to poke my nose in other people's business.
I tried to say something once, and she stopped talking to me –
or it didn't do any good.
I don't want to lose my friendship if she gets angry at me for
butting in.

No One Specifically
to Help: I don't know anyone who's ever been abused.
I feel bad for THOSE people – but that's a fact of life for them
that won't ever change.

Denial: It's not domestic abuse – they just argue a lot.
He would never do anything like that.

Victim's Fault: She provokes it – deserves it.
She won't leave – She must like it – I would never put up with
that.
I have seen her slap him, what do you expect him to do?

Significant Other
Told You to MYOB: I was going to do something, but my husband (mother, sister,
friend) convinced me it was best not to get involved.

Someone said that I didn't know both sides of the story, so I
better just stay out of it.

“Or Are We Part of The Solution?”

Path to Getting Involved

Acknowledge Domestic Violence Affects all of Society:

It is a crime and it is a public matter.
Even if I don't know someone that's being abused, it is happening in my community and in my workplace.
People of all ages, backgrounds, races, social classes, and religions are affected.

Recognize All Forms of Abuse as Unacceptable:

I have been educated about verbal, emotional, financial, sexual, spiritual, and physical abuse and understand how devastating each one is.
No one ever deserves to be abused.

Respond to Domestic Violence Whenever I Encounter it:

I will not ignore the signs of abuse in another person.
I will hold abusers accountable for their actions and not blame the victims.
I will not remain silent out of fear or embarrassment since silence = violence.
I can do something to help someone else and remain safe myself.

Support victims and Advocates to create change:

I will listen without judging.
I won't turn my back on someone who doesn't follow my advice.
I can offer my resources and talents to a domestic violence organization to help others.
I will commit to doing things in my home, neighborhood, community, school, and workplace to help end domestic violence.

Connect Those Needing Services to Helping Organizations:

I have learned about community resources for families facing domestic violence.
I can hand out referral information to those in need or make the information easily available.
I will identify myself to others as someone they can talk to about the abuse.
I don't have to have all of the answers – I can let others know that help is out there and encourage them to connect to helping organizations.

Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault (Rape) is a growing social problem affecting a significant number of people in our country. Rape is the fastest growing violent crime in America and the least reported.

What is Sexual Assault?

- ❖ Any unwanted sexual act committed or attempted against a person's will.
- ❖ Sexual contact forced by dates, spouses, family members, acquaintances or strangers. Silence does not mean yes.
- ❖ Any forced oral or anal sex.
- ❖ Any sexual act committed against a child in which the child is being used for sexual gratification.
- ❖ A crime of violence, not a crime of sex.

Know the Facts:

- ❖ 1 in 3 women and 1 out of 5 men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.
- ❖ Every minute in the United States a woman is raped.
- ❖ Assaults can happen to any person, regardless of age, race, religion, sexual orientation, or social-economic status.
- ❖ Assaults by strangers are the exception not the rule. In over 80% of all sexual assaults, the assailant is known to the victim.

Common Survivor Reaction:

If you are a survivor of sexual assault, you have been traumatized – physically, mentally emotionally, and spiritually. The adjustment and recovery process, also known as Rape Trauma Syndrome, is experienced in several stages, and time frames for the stages of recovery and healing vary...each individual is unique.

Remember, the assault was not your fault; the responsibility for the assault lies with the assailant.

How We Can Help....

The Women's Center of San Joaquin County provides a wide range of supportive, educational, and crisis intervention services to victims of sexual assault. Services include:

- ❖ Advocacy: 24 hour helpline, Crisis Intervention, Legal & Justice System Support, and Hospital response.
- ❖ Rape Prevention Education Programs: Grades K – 12, Colleges, Community Organizations, Businesses, etc.
- ❖ Peer Counseling for Children, Teens, and Adults.
- ❖ Support Groups

Women's Center of San Joaquin County Sexual Assault Services

The Sexual Assault Department offers 24hr a day supportive services for victims and families in crisis

- ⌘ 24 hour Crisis Line
- ⌘ Personal accompaniment to law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and social service providers
- ⌘ Certified peer counselors offer short term counseling
- ⌘ Support groups meet weekly offering ongoing support and assistance
- ⌘ Educational & Prevention programs are offered to schools and community based organizations
- ⌘ Self defensive training classes
- ⌘ Information and referral to other victims' assistance agencies
- ⌘ All services are free and confidential
- ⌘ Services are available in English and Spanish

Stockton Office
620 North San Joaquin Street
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 941-2611 Business
(209) 941-4963 Fax
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Sexual Assault Crisis Line
(209) 465-4997

Domestic Violence Services In San Joaquin County

Domestic Violence Hotline:
Women's Center of San Joaquin County
(209) 465-4878

Sexual Assault Hotline:
Women's Center of San Joaquin County
(209) 465-4997

Police Emergency: 911

Call only in an emergency. To fulfill mandatory reporting requirements or to make non-emergency inquiries, contact your city police department or other relevant local law enforcement agency.

Women's Shelters/Domestic Violence Programs

Women's Center of San Joaquin County

***Stockton Office**

620 North San Joaquin County
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 941-2611

***Lodi Office**

29 S. Washington Street
Lodi, CA 95241
(209) 368-3406

***Tracy Office**

1005 A Street
Tracy, CA 95376
(209) 833-0300

District Attorney

San Joaquin District Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 990
Stockton, CA 95201
(209) 469-2400

Victim/Witness

***Victim/Witness Assistance Center**

San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office
22 East Weber Street
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 468-2500

Counseling Services for Victims of Domestic Violence

Women's Center of San Joaquin County

Stockton Office

620 North San Joaquin County
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 941-2611

Lodi Office

29 S. Washington Street
Lodi, CA 95241
(209) 368-3406

Tracy Office

1005 A Street
Tracy, CA 95376
(209) 833-0300

Counseling Services for Batterers

Valley Community Counseling Services (209) 956-4240
James Johnson, L.C.S.W. (209) 951-6122
Pacific Educational Services (800) 346-5891
Center for Positive Prevention Alternatives (209) 948-4357
Sentencing Concepts Inc. (209) 456-2393

Sexual Assault Services

Women's Center of San Joaquin County

620 North San Joaquin Street
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 941-2611

Child Abuse Services

Child Protective Services
333 East Washington Street
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 468-1792

Child Abuse Prevention Council

604 E. Acacia Street
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 464-4524

Elder Abuse Services

Adult Protective Services
333 East Washington Street
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 468-2202

Mental Health Services

San Joaquin County Mental Health Services
1212 N. California Street
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 468-2399

Restraining Orders

The agencies marked (*) provide assistance with Temporary Restraining Orders

Feb 2000

Silent Witness Exhibit

The Silent Witness Exhibit is a traveling memorial honoring women who were murdered in acts of domestic violence. The exhibit is made up of life-size figures each representing a woman who once lived in San Joaquin County, worked, had neighbors, family, children, whose life ended violently at the hands of a husband, ex-husband, partner, or acquaintance.

Silent Witness began in 1990 in Minnesota and has become a national and international project. The goals of the memorial exhibit are to remember and honor the women who were murdered in acts of domestic violence, to raise awareness in our communities of the extent of domestic violence; to provide advocacy, to connect people with local resources for ending the violence in their lives; to encourage community and legislative action to end the violence in our society.

The Lodi Office of the Women's Center of San Joaquin County initiated the project in San Joaquin County as a part of their 10 year anniversary providing services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Our hope is that the impact of this event will heighten the awareness of residents of the county to the continuing family violence in our communities.

The Silent Witness exhibit will be made available to groups and agencies within the county as a whole or in part. Arrangements may be made by contacting a Women's Center office.

We wish to acknowledge the Lodi Tokay Rotary Club and the American Express Financial Advisors for their monetary contribution to the materials necessary for the exhibit and the DeWitt Nelson Training Center for providing the labor to make the silhouettes.

Stockton (209) 941-2611
Lodi (209) 368-3406
Tracy (209) 833-0300

WOMEN'S CENTER



OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

The Startling Statistics

Domestic Violence

Every seven seconds a woman is battered in the United States. (Source: Family Violence Prevention Fund)

25 percent of all couples in ongoing relationships experience repetitive abuse. (Source: United HealthCare's Medical and Human Risk Management Services)

Domestic violence is the most widespread cause of injury for women ages 15 to 44 years surpassing car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined. (Source: U. S. Surgeon General's Office)

Children who learn violence at home are at risk to continue the violence in their relationships as adults, either as batterers or as victims. Domestic violence can have long-term effects on children. (Source: Office of Criminal Justice Planning)

In 70 percent of the families where domestic violence occurs, the children are abused. (Source: Los Angeles Police Department)


Sexual Assault

Every minute a woman is raped in the United States. (Source: National Victim Center, 1992)
One in 3 women and 1 in 6 men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

Over 80% of all rapes are committed by someone the victim knows.

In 1998, 218 forcible rapes were reported within San Joaquin County. If we use the national statistic of 1 in 10 rapes are reported, we might estimate that 2,100 rapes or attempted rapes occurred within the county.

One out of three girls will be sexually assaulted before the age of 18. One of five boys will be sexually assaulted before the age of 18.



OCTOBER Domestic Violence Awareness Month. During this month, special efforts will be made to inform and educate the public on the effects of domestic violence.

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic Violence can include:
Threats, Intimidation, Emotional Abuse,
Sexual Abuse, and Physical Violence.

It occurs within intimate relationships:

Husbands and Wives,
Boyfriends and Girlfriends,
Same Sex Partners, Ex-Partners, etc.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A CRIME!

PLEASE JOIN THE WOMEN'S CENTER'S EFFORT TO "STOP AND PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY WEARING THE PURPLE RIBBON."

The Purple Ribbon symbolizes our commitment to creating a safe and violent free community.

Your support is appreciated.

**THE WOMEN'S CENTER OF
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY**

Invites You to Join the Effort to

**STOP
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AND
SEXUAL ASSAULT**

**WOMEN'S CENTER
SERVICES:**

PREVENTION:

- Community Education Presentations
Services available to the Latino, Southeast Asian, Youth, and Business Communities

**PEER COUNSELING
& SUPPORT GROUPS**

ADVOCACY:

- Temporary Restraining Orders
- Hospital & Court Accompaniment
- Social Service Accompaniment

SHELTER:

- Safety for Women and Children fleeing from violent homes
- Vine House: Safe House
- DAWN House: Shelter
- After DAWN: Transitional Housing

24 HOUR HELPLINE:

- Domestic Violence: 209-465-4878
- Sexual Assault: 209-465-4997

WOMEN'S CENTER LOCATIONS

Stockton: 209-941-2611

Lodi: 209-368-3406

Tracy: 209-833-0300

DATE-RAPE Safety Tips:

1. Have a safety plan.
2. Trust your instincts.
3. Communicate openly and honestly with your partner.
4. Set your limits and express them to your partner.
5. Know your rights.

What to do if RAPED:

1. Get to a safe place.
2. Call someone to be with you.
3. Don't wash or change your clothes.
4. Get a medical exam.
5. Contact a RAPE crisis center.
6. Get into counseling.
7. Be gentle on yourself.
8. Do not minimize the assault.
9. Remember...

It was not your fault!

Identifying a potential Batterer...

What you should ask yourself:

Is your partner excessively jealous and controlling?

Does your partner want to control every aspect of your life?

Does your partner constantly attack you verbally through criticisms and putdowns?

Does your partner make degrading remarks about women, especially relating to their intelligence, sexuality and bodies?

Has your partner ever destroyed your possessions?

What to do if you think you may be battered...

1. Choose a safe place and decide how to get there.
2. Always keep a list of emergency phone numbers with you.
3. Gather important documents together such as personal papers, SS cards, birth certificates, school immunization records and immigration papers for you and your children.
4. Call the Women's Center helpline for help and info

How the Women's Center can help you...

- Short-term peer counseling.
- Support groups for battered women, rape victims, adults molested as children.
- Hospital and Court accompaniment for domestic violence and sexual assault victims.
- Assistant with Temporary Restraining Orders.
- Dawn House, a shelter for women and children fleeing from violent homes.
- 24 hr. hotlines for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Family Violence Prevention Education to the Community.

3/99

Victim Witness • (209) 468-2500
Valley Community Counseling • (209) 956-4240 / 334-2126
Tracy Police Dept. • (209) 831-4550
Stockton Police Dept. • (209) 937-8377
Shenett's Dept. • (209) 468-4421
S.J.C. Mental Health Services Crisis Line • (209) 468-8686
Ripon Police Dept. • (209) 599-2102
Manitoba Police Dept. • (209) 239-8444
Lodi Police Dept. • (209) 333-6727
Lathrop Police Dept. • (209) 858-5551
Escalon Police Dept. • (209) 838-7093
California Youth Crisis Line • (1-800) 843-5200
Child Abuse Prevention Council • (209) 464-4524
Child Protective Services • (209) 468-1333 • 24 hr. response

Community Resources:



You are
not alone...

Women's Center • 620 N. San Joaquin Street • Stkn., CA 95202

Business Office (209) 941-2611
Lodi Office (209) 368-3406
Tracy Office (209) 833-0300
Sexual Assault Hotline* (209) 465-4997
Battered Women's Helpline* (209) 465-HURT

*24 hour hotlines • Collect calls accepted.

Break the **silence** on domestic **violence**

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
ACTION KIT

Your silence leaves the victim of domestic violence trapped in fear.

Breaking the silence gives her a way out.

Many of us know, or think we might know, a woman who is in an abusive relationship. But we can always come up with reasons to ignore our discomfort and hope the problem will solve itself. Here are some common reasons why people don't break the silence on domestic violence:

- *"I might get hurt...or make things worse for the victim."* You do not need to physically intervene. And the only thing that can make things worse for the victim is for her torment to be ignored by those of us in a position to support her.

- *"If she wants to stay in such a lousy situation, that's her problem."* Victims are trapped in domestic violence by a number of factors: deep fear, lack of financial support, love, loyalty, cultural and family values, and the depression and hopelessness that constant abuse can cause. Also, victims know that abuse doesn't stop just because they leave. In fact, the danger increases for many victims when they do leave. Imagining that she is free to leave any time absolves us, but does not help her. Nobody can make the personal and painful decisions for her, but you can be there to support her.

- *"Poking my nose in will cost me her friendship...and she doesn't seem to want to talk about it."* Domestic violence could cost your friend her life. Talking about her situation isn't easy for either of you. She may feel shame and guilt, so you need to be tactful, open, and non-judgmental. She may not

respond the first time. She has to decide what's safe and can't be rushed into action. If she hears your open-ended offer to put her in contact with a domestic violence hotline *when she chooses*, she'll feel safe coming back to you.

- *Here's an example of what to say.*

It doesn't sound very dramatic, but it can make a dramatic difference:

"I'm concerned about you. Are you okay? Do you want to talk to me about it?...It's not your fault. You didn't deserve it...I understand...I'm not going to share this with anyone else. I'm not going to tell you what to do. What you do is fine with me. You know, there's a number to call to find out more about this. Do you want to call them now? Shall I give you the number?...That's okay. Just know that I have the number. If you ever want it. I do care."

- *Are there things NOT to say?*

It doesn't help to start planning a rescue or escape for her. Ask, rather than tell her what YOU think is going on. And don't start criticizing her partner, however much you may feel he deserves it. (The best way to show you are on her side is by staying out of the business of the relationship itself. If she was able to confront him and leave, she would already have done it.) The idea is to gently break through the isolation she is living in and offer a bridge she can use when she chooses.

Nine ways for men to take a stand against domestic violence:

1 Say out loud that abuse and fear in relationships are never acceptable.

2 Let other men know the equality you strive for in your relationship: that it's a source of pride, not embarrassment.

3 Teach your kids that abuse is never okay; they'll follow your example of equality and respect.

4 Acknowledge that domestic violence affects us all. We all pay the price in juvenile crime, drug use, teen pregnancy, higher health care costs, and lost productivity on the job.

5 Know what services are available in your community, and be ready to refer a victim or abuser to a place that can help.

6 Encourage and support your community's efforts to prevent domestic violence.

7 If you're abusive, seek help. If not, share your strengths.

8 Don't condone a friend or relative's abusive behavior by ignoring it or attributing it to stress. Silence is complicity. If you don't speak up, the abuser believes it's acceptable to you.

9 Take the problem personally. Your involvement and leadership really matters.

**“Is there life after domestic violence?
Just ask us.”**



It started with one person who cared. A family member, a neighbor, a cop, somebody at work or worship who told us we mattered, offered a phone number to call, and encouraged us to reach out. To them, it may have seemed like a small thing. But no woman in this picture will ever forget their gift of hope.

Questions and **answers**

Q: What is domestic violence?

answer: Domestic violence is a pattern of one partner controlling another through threats and abuse. It is a learned behavior; it can be unlearned if the abuser takes responsibility for his actions and seeks help. This broad definition can alert you to the early signs of escalating notional and verbal brutality found in domestic violence, even before you witness or suffer a physical assault.

Q: Who are the victims?

answer: Married and unmarried, wealthy and low-income, gay, straight and lesbian, young and old, spanning all religious, ethnic and racial groups. 85% of reported victims are women; that's why this kit refers to abusers as male and victims as female.

We know most men would never abuse their partners, but unless they take a stand against domestic violence, abusive men won't see that their behavior is unacceptable.

Q: Who are the abusers?

answer: They can be from any walk of life and be friendly, solidly employed churchgoers. Red flags include: jealousy, explosive temper, constant criticism, difficulty expressing feelings, controlling behavior, childhood exposure to abuse, destruction of property, threats and physically abusive acts.

Q: How widespread is it?

answer: A woman is assaulted by her partner every nine seconds in the U.S. There are four million victims a year. 30% of all female murder victims are slain by their male partners. One in three Americans say they have witnessed domestic violence. In the Sacramento area, domestic violence is reported to police every hour, 365 days a year.

Q: How can I identify it?

answer: Identifying verbal abuse or physical violence is simple. But be alert to indirect evidence of domestic violence so that intervention can occur as early and safely as possible. Is someone you know:

- Afraid of her partner?
- Constantly apologizing for her partner's behavior?
- Unable to go out with friends or family because of her partner's jealousy?
- Ever forced to have sex?
- Denied money or barred from getting a job?
- Threatened with arrest or being reported to the authorities by her partner?
- Hit, kicked, shoved or had things thrown at her? Ever been kept from leaving a room by restraint or been blocked at a doorway?

Q: Is there a pattern to it?

answer: Domestic violence is not an isolated event. Each incident builds on what has happened before and the abuse becomes more frequent and severe. Remember, it is not about anger, drunkenness or drugs but about control of a partner. The violence is not always physical. It can include:

- *Verbal abuse* that humiliates or demeans;
- *Emotional abuse* like threats, stalking, extreme jealousy, controlling behavior and isolation from others;
- *Economic abuse* that traps a partner in poverty or debt, prevents a partner from working or having access to money;
- *Sexual abuse*, including forced sex, harsh sexual criticism, and flagrant public "cheating";
- *Physical abuse* like hitting, strangling, kicking, pinching, hair-pulling, arm-twisting, tripping, biting, restraining, shoving or using weapons.

All are harmful to the victim and her children. (Half of households where domestic violence occurs are also scenes of child abuse.)

Q: Is it a crime?

answer: Physical assault and battery are crimes no matter where they take place—on the street or in the home. So are harassment, stalking and sexual assault. Abusers are arrested and jailed. Law enforcement agencies in the Sacramento area consider domestic violence a very serious crime and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

Q: Is there ever any excuse?

answer: Batterers often come up with excuses and frequently blame the victim, deny the abuse and minimize the severity of their violence. There is never an excuse for abusing anyone and no possible reason for brutality or coercion in a "loving" relationship. We all get angry at people we care for. But domestic violence tends to swing between brutality and "making up," the level of abuse always rising. It is all about control, not equality.

Q: What can I do?

answer: If you believe someone is in physical danger, call 911—just as you'd want someone to do for you. If you suspect that someone is trapped in a pattern of domestic violence, call a domestic violence hotline for insight and advice. You need not give your name. The staff at the hotline can help you think through what to say or do to help the victim find safety. We've included a brief outline of helpful responses on the left panel. Even if you don't know anyone who's being abused, you can still create a safer climate by getting the word out in the community. See the back cover for suggestions.

Why more and more people are breaking the silence...

“I want to help my sister.”

“I’m calling for a neighbor with two kids who needs it.”

“We have some kids who are at risk here.”

“I can speak out more with your help.”

“An employee I’m concerned about.”

“It’s for my situation.”

“I teach a class.”

“We have over 100 employees.”

“I see too much domestic violence and want to know how to stop it.”

“For a friend.”

“I work in a medical office.”

“I can help.”

“My niece is being beaten by her boyfriend.”

“For someone who desperately needs it.”

“I am a pastoral counselor

“I could hang up a poster.”

“To safeguard myself.”

“I want to share this with some of the families in our neighborhood.”

“To break the cycle in my own life.”

Nine simple, safe, effective strategies to end domestic violence in our community

1 Support your local domestic violence organization.

Donate money to help them provide services to battered women and their children. Volunteer your time and talent—you can make a difference!

2 Break the silence about domestic violence.

Don't be embarrassed to speak up if someone is blaming a victim or minimizing abuse. Encourage others to hold batterers accountable for their behavior. This sends a message that abuse is wrong, that victims don't deserve it and batterers should not "get away with it." You never know who may be listening and need to hear those words.

3 Get the facts.

Contact your local domestic violence agency for speakers and assistance in organizing a presentation. Organize a discussion in your neighborhood or at your workplace. To end domestic violence, it must be brought out in the open.

4 Hang a poster denouncing domestic violence at work or at another public place.

Show that domestic violence is never acceptable. Reinforce the point that batterers must be held accountable for their behavior. Let victims see that there is help and that no one deserves to be abused.

5 Check your workplace policies.

Form a workplace committee to implement policies that expand Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) to include counseling referrals for abusers and victims and benefit packages to allow flexible scheduling for victims seeking restraining orders and/or shelter.

6 Place referral cards in discreet areas—restrooms at school, doctors' offices, places of worship, etc.

Call a local domestic violence agency for referral cards. Restock these cards on a regular basis. Remember, victims and family members are more likely to take information when they feel safe to do so.

7 Talk to your child's teacher about including domestic violence prevention in school curricula.

By their senior year in high school, one in three teens will have been in an abusive dating relationship. To reverse this trend, young people should be taught about healthy relationships and skills that foster non-violence. Encourage your school board to hold one staff in-service day per year that focuses on domestic violence and its impact on the classroom.

8 Write letters to elected officials.

Take some time to write letters about how domestic violence affects the whole community. Back legislation that provides support for innovative domestic violence programs.

9 Ask clergy to speak out about domestic violence from the pulpit.

The place of worship is where many people turn for guidance and support in their lives. Your clergy's expression of intolerance for domestic violence can aid many members of your congregation. Speakers from local domestic violence agencies can also make educational presentations to your congregation.

For more copies of this Action Kit, call 1-888-303-4500.



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